

Long Term Care Options Counseling: Working with Individuals who are Hard of Hearing

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INCIDENCE OF HEARING LOSS

- 22 MILLION PEOPLE IN UNITED STATES HAVE HEARING LOSS
- 2 MILLION ARE DEAF
- 1 IN TEN AMERICANS EXPERIENCE HEARING LOSS
- 1 IN FOUR AMERICANS 65 YEARS OLD
- 1 IN TWO AMERICANS 70 YEARS OLD PLUS
- 80 YEARS OLD PLUS

PINPOINTING THE POPULATION – PEOPLE WHO ARE HARD OF HEARING:

- Have some degree of hearing loss varying from mild to profound
- Vary in terms of age at onset, i.e., from infancy through late adulthood
- May be able to get some benefit from assistive listening devices
- May use hearing aids
- Rely on English as their primary language
- Do not usually know Sign Language
- Are not affiliated with Deaf Community
- Function primarily within the "hearing world" in terms of family/work

PRESBYCUSIS

- Means "old man hearing"
- Inner ear problem
- Not surgically correctable
- Causes loss of clarity and speech discrimination
 - High Frequency Loss
 - Problems with Telephone
 - Problems with Television
- Hearing Aids may or may not help
- May affect balance

BIG effect socially, emotionally and psychologically

- Hearing loss belongs to entire family unit
- Implications
- Loss of Intimacy in relationships
- Selective Hearing

Three Levels

- Level 1 – Primitive Level
 - Basic sounds which serve as auditory background
- Level 2 – Signal or Warning Level
 - Sounds which are direct signal of events that help people make
 - Adjustments throughout the day
- Level 3 – Symbolic Level
 - Symbolic nature of LANGUAGE

SIGNALS INDICATING HEARING LOSS

- Frequently asking people to repeat
- Inappropriate response to what is said
- Difficulty understanding in group situations
- Blaming others for not speaking clearly
- Defensive about communication problems
- Intently watching speakers mouth
- Turning head to side to "hear better"
- Strained expression around eyes
- Talking too loudly or too softly
- Turns TV and music up
- Speech deterioration
- Fatigue, indifference, insecurity, indecision
- Suspiciousness
- Lonely, unhappy
- Tendency to hog conversations
- False pride
- Social withdrawal

FACTORS EFFECTING ADJUSTMENT TO HEARING LOSS

- Nature of hearing loss
- Gradual or sudden loss
- Extent of other losses/changes
- Personality/Pre-hearing loss adjustment
- Support systems
- Nature of activities
- Adaptability/Affordability of services
- Attitudes of society

DETECTION

- Otologist
- Audiologist
- Hearing Aids
- Hearing Aid Vendors

ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES (ALDs)

Can be used with or without hearing aids

- audio loop
- FM
- infrared

Remember....

- All systems have advantages and disadvantages.
- Which is the best system? Depends entirely on setting, nature of the program and intended audience.
- Benefit people with RESIDUAL HEARING.

ALD's Continued

ALERTING DEVICES

- telephone ring
- smoke detectors
- alarm clocks
- oven timers
- door bells
- wake up system

CAPTIONING SYSTEMS

- CART (Computer Assisted Realtime Transcription)
- C-Print

TELEPHONE RELATED

- Amplified telephones
- Telephone amplifiers
- TTYs
- CapTel

COMMUNICATION TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH A PERSON WHO IS HARD OF HEARING

- Pick the best place for communication. Be sure room has good lighting and is free of background noise.
- Get person's attention before speaking.
- Face him or her directly while speaking.
- Use facial expressions and helpful gestures.
- Speak slowly and don't shout.
- Maintain your voice level from beginning to end of the sentence.
- Make each word distinct even though it slows your speech.
- Keep your hands away from your mouth and don't eat, smoke, chew gum.

Communication continued

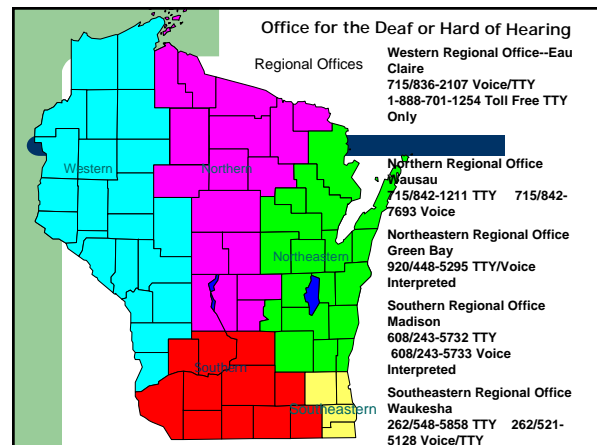
- If person doesn't understand what you said the first time, rephrase it.
- Indicate change of subject with a word or phrase and check for understanding.
- Don't speak to person with your back to the window or in an unlighted room.
- DON'T EXPECT THE PERSON TO LIPREAD WITH GREAT AMOUNT OF ACCURACY!!!!!! Can YOU?
- Stay positive and relaxed. Give the person time.
- Do not talk about a hard of hearing person in his or her presence. Talk TO them. Not ABOUT them.
- Be flexible and ask what you can do to facilitate communication.

RESOURCES:

- Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Regional Offices
- Hearing Loss Association of America
- www.hearingloss.org
- Local Independent Living Centers
- TAP/TEPP

Wisconsin Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Mission Statement

To ensure that the variety of life's choices and equal opportunities are available to all deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing people



Contact information

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